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764 Kwoma culture defines the persons who shall dispose of and mourn for the dead. The relatives of the deceased gather to place his body on a platform where it is exposed for sev-
765 eral months. Then the members of the subtribe attend a sec-
[534] ond funeral, for the ceremonial disposal of the bones, and a
[535] feast, after which the adult males celebrate the end of the mourning period at the house tamberan with gong, flute, and dance.

571 These, then, are the variously constituted groups and categories of persons as defined by Kwoma culture. They provide the framework into which a child is born and in terms of which he has to learn to act.

114 The hamlet in which our house was built, and hence the
621 one from which we gathered most of our information, is
361 called Rumbima. It is situated on a mountain ridge near the
614 geographical center of Hongwam subtribe. (See map.) The
613 men of Rumbima claim descent from the giant fish hawk and
773 hence belong to the *Hagamakwo* sib. They divide themselves into two lineages, the larger claiming descent from the culture hero Mangwiyow, and the smaller from Wasahof.

621 Mangwiyow is reputed to have had five sons, each of whom
613 sired a family line. Our house was built among the dwellings
592 of the living descendants of these five brothers. The oldest
[114] living male in the line whose houses were nearest us was named Wof (household 1, family line 2).[18] He dwelt a few
[595] yards from our hut with his first wife Kaya, his levirate wife
[597] Chinuwa, his adopted son Mey (a nephew), his adopted daughter Buka (a niece), and his stepson Kum (Chinuwa's
[754] son by her former husband). Wof is a man of about forty-five[19] whose skin is grey and scaly from tinea. He has the reputation of being a powerful sorcerer.

621 Adjacent to Wof's house is the rather dilapidated dwell-
592

[18] Households are presented both on the map and on the household chart. Family lines may be found on the lineage chart.

[805] [19] Since the Kwoma had no method of counting years, the ages given are
[177] rough approximations based on the physical appearance of the individual
[13] and on his estimated age at the time of the tribe's first fleeting contact with Europeans, the members of the Behrmann expedition of 1913. (See W. Behrmann, *Im Stromgebiet des Sepik* [Berlin, 1922].)

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ing of Yowaka (household 2), an old woman who cannot walk because of a great sore on her leg but who makes up for that with her sharp tongue and loud voice. She is the widow of Yaramp, Wof's first cousin, and the mother of Mar (see household 3). With her lives Mar's betrothed, Yawa, a rather unattractive and lazy adolescent girl.

Yowaka's son, Mar (household 3, family line 2), the owner of the third dwelling in this cluster of houses, is a tall gangling youth who has not adjusted very well to Kwoma society. He shows marked anxiety about expressing himself sexually and aggressively, and appears unable to measure up to the standards of behavior set by the culture with respect to these drives. With him live his adolescent sister Awa; two of his father's brother's children—Kwiya, an adolescent girl, and Fit, a boy of eight or nine; and Gwiyap, an adolescent nephew of Wof's.[20] Gwiyap, perhaps my best informant, is a lad just past puberty. He is not yet fully grown but is extremely intelligent, very active, and has learned to speak pidgin English fluently.

Just across the path from these three houses is that of Marok (household 7, family line 5). With him live his wife Dawi, his married sister U'ka,[21] and his adopted daughter Afi, the real sister of Gwiyap. Marok is in his middle twenties. He is the only male of his age group in the hamlet who did not leave for a time to work for the whites. For this reason he is also the only one who speaks no pidgin English.

About fifty yards down the path from the houses of Wof and Marok is a dwelling shared by three brothers with their wives and children (household 4, family line 4). War, the oldest, a man in his thirties, is a cleanly built, thick set person with a somewhat cocky air. He has the highest status in the community, being renowned as a head-hunter, singer,

[20] It is unusual for an unmarried adolescent to be in charge of a household. This came about as a result of the death in rather quick succession of the fathers of Mar, of Fit, and of Gwiyap. Actually, Wof and Yowaka kept a sharp watch over the household. The three houses were near enough together so that they could do this quite effectively.

[21] She is living with her brother while her husband is away on a three-year contract to work on a white man's plantation.

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593 already been told. The status of father and mother is important enough to summarize here, however, even at the risk of repetition. By the time a Kwoma couple marry, they are well aware of the assets of a large family. They know that a son will help with gardening, housebuilding, and the other economic tasks, that, when he grows up, he will stand by them in the struggle against sorcery and in disputes over property, that he will increase the prestige of the family in the community, and finally that he will support them when they grow old. The young couple know that a daughter is also an asset. She will help with economic tasks until she marries and [583] she will also bring prestige to them. Furthermore, her bride- [842] price will bring in shell money which the sons will need to pay for their wives. For these reasons a man and woman set out [586] to produce children as quickly as possible and are gravely disappointed if they cannot do so. Indeed, a barren marriage often leads to divorce.[39]

842 The Kwoma believe that a fetus is formed from the mix-
843 ture of the woman's blood and the man's sperm and that repeated insemination is necessary to cause fertilization. They know that the cessation of menstruation is a sign of pregnancy, but do not cease their sexual relations until the woman is big with child. A woman observes certain food taboos during pregnancy. She does not eat certain kinds of fish, flying fox, or cassowary in order to insure a normal and healthy child, and she may not eat birds lest the child grow feathers in place of hair.

844 When the expectant mother goes into labor, her husband must leave the house, and he and all other men must stay away until the child is delivered. Her own mother is called to attend her, and the adult women of the household or near- [754] by households assist. These women take charge of the baby when it is born, cut the umbilical cord, and bury the placenta under the floor of the house to prevent it from coming into the hands of a sorcerer.

[597] [39] I am not certain whether barrenness constitutes formal grounds for divorce. The fact that there were several couples still married, who had no children except by adoption, suggests that it is not. In two of the four cases of divorce on which I have detailed information, barrenness was given as one of the reasons for the separation.

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the hands of a sorcerer. As soon as the mother is able, she takes care of the baby and nurses it.[40] Both parents show special concern for the child until his fontanel closes,[41] as they believe that he is particularly susceptible to sorcery during this time. For this reason the mother stays at home and does not receive visitors. The father, in order to insure the child's safety during this period, does not chew betel, or scratch himself except with a stick, and he holds his cigarettes between tweezers.[42]

Under certain circumstances, when the parents do not wish to bring up an infant, they may either offer it for adoption or kill it. If a woman gives birth to a monstrosity, she disposes of it as soon as it is born. She treats one of twins in the same way. Parents may decide not to bring up a normal child when there are already several children of one sex in the family and the new baby is of the same sex. If the children are all girls, for example, there will be no one to inherit the land nor to protect and care for the parents in their old age, so the mother may offer for adoption or kill a new girl infant in order to free herself more quickly to produce another child with the hope that it be a boy. Similarly, a boy infant may be killed or offered for adoption if the previous children are all male, since it will be very difficult to obtain sufficient shell money to pay for their wives if they have no sisters. The optimal family, therefore, is one in which boys and girls are equally balanced. Infanticide and adoption are employed to approximate this ratio.

The mother has full responsibility for the immediate physical care of her offspring during infancy. For the first few months she permits no one else to handle the infant, but after this she allows her co-wife to give her short respites. She may permit the father, uncle, or aunt to hold the infant for a few moments for their amusement, but she rarely intrusts it to

[40] The above information was obtained from male informants and hence is incomplete and not necessarily reliable.

[41] Informants described this as "when the baby's heart stops beating on the top of his head."

[42] A man observes these same taboos when he plants yams.